

**Wisconsin Urban Forestry Council Minutes**  
**DATCP, Madison WI**  
February 16th, 2005

**Attendance:**

**Voting members:** Bruce Allison, Linda Barcz, Tim Bauknecht, Bob Brush, Bob Dahl, Mark Dochnal, Jeff Edgar, Jeff Gorman, Leif Hubbard, Dave Liska, Mike Maddox, Mike Michlig, Ken Ottman, Dan Traas, Joe Wilson.

**Ex – officio, non-voting members:** Dick Rideout

**Non-voting guests:** Paul DeLong, Matt Duvall, Nathan Eisner, John Gall, Jeff Roe, Tracy Salisbury, Tracey Teodecki.

**Absent voting members:** Christine Giese, Wayne Glowac, Kevin Hinckley, Laura Jull, Heather Mann, Bob Skiera, Joan Stevens, Dick Welch.

**Meeting Minutes**

*Meeting called to order 9:35 am*

**1.) CALL TO ORDER**

- a.) Members & guests introduced themselves.
- b.) *Minutes from 7/28/04 were reviewed and approved with no changes.*

**2.) NOMINATIONS – *Jeff Edgar***

- a.) Introduction & Nomination of John Gall & Matt Duvall as voting members to Council
- b.) *Motion to nominate John Gall & Matt Duvall to DNR Secretary Hassett for approval is passed and carried*
- c.) Council currently has 26 members (24 voting) with three upcoming vacancies this year

**3.) DNR Forestry Budget Developments - *Dave Liska***

- a.) Dave Liska asked Paul DeLong to summarize the changes proposed by the Governor's budget.
- b.) Paul described the impact of proposed changes by the Governor's forestry budget. This includes the loss of the urban forestry grants coordinator as well as 40 additional reductions in private forestry assistance. There are two issues relating to the UF Grants Coordinator: 1) Where will funding come from this position and; 2) Where will the position reside? The Governor's budget denied state funding of this position but allowed Forestry to retain the position IF they could find funding for it. If alternate funding by forestry is not possible, this position would be moved to DNR's Community Financial Assistance. However, if federal (urban forestry) funds are used for this position, it seems clear that the position should remain within Forestry.
- c.) Dave Liska asked Paul DeLong how Council can best support the reinstitution of the UF Grant Coordinator position.
- d.) Paul suggested that if the Council's role is to advise DNR on UF issues, it should convey its opinion of the value of the UF Grants coordinator position. This should probably take the form of a letter to Secretary Hassett's office and should cc the state's Senate Majority Leader, the Assembly Speaker, Marc Marotta (DOA Secretary), and Paul DeLong himself.

- e.) Dave Liska asked Paul DeLong what information such a letter should include.
- f.) Paul answered that it would be important for the Council to convey its opinion that the Department should continue to provide the services & functionality of the UF Grants coordinator as well as the Council's opinion that the position should be funded with state forestry dollars.
- g.) Dave Liska inquired when would be the best time to submit such a letter to the Secretary.
- h.) Paul DeLong advised that because internal discussions regarding this position will be ongoing, such a letter should be submitted immediately.
- i.) Joe Wilson stated his belief that the Council should advocate for the UF grant coordinator position to be funded with state forestry dollars because the future availability of federal UF funds may be in question due to recent budget reductions at the federal level. Joe also emphasized that he would need to see some numbers/statistics regarding the importance of this position to the UF program. These numbers would help him (personally) to approach his legislators. Joe then asked Paul DeLong how this Council could respond to federal budget reductions in urban forestry in order to convey the Council's position with regard to the importance of continued federal UF funding.
- j.) Paul responded that the Council should consider sending a second letter to the Wisconsin Congressional Delegation as well as Wisconsin Representatives Herb Kohl and Dave Obey in Washington D.C. This letter could also reiterate the importance of this federal funding in making possible the cost sharing partnership of state & federal UF dollars. The letter should also convey the Council's opinion that federal UF dollars should continue to be available for communities big and small (i.e. Fed. UF \$ should not be available only to large metropolitan areas).
- k.) Dave Liska requested that Dick Rideout provide the position description for the UF grant coordinator position in order to help the Council craft its message. Dave also request that the RUFCs provide data on the amount of their time spent on UF grant administration annually.
- l.) Ken Ottman asked Paul DeLong where this single position (UF Grants coord.) fits in relation to the total number of other Forestry position reductions required by the Governor's budget and how should this impact the message sent by the Council.
- m.) Paul responded that this position is only one of forty positions that will have to be cut to fulfill the Governor's budget. Therefore it is relevant that the Council's message express its concern over the overall reduction in private forestry positions as well as its specific concerns over losing UF Grant assistance services to municipalities.
- n.) Joe Wilson expressed his opinion that this is a prime opportunity for Council members to lobby in conjunction with allied professional groups.
- o.) Ken Ottman motions that the Council issue a letter to DNR Secretary Hassett to express its concerns over the loss of UF grant administrations function imposed by the Governor's proposed position reductions of BOTH the UF Grant Coordinator AND the Southeast Regional Urban Forestry Coordinator positions. This letter should be drafted by the Council Chair and forwarded to Council members by Nathan Eisner. *The motion is passed and carried.*
- p.) Jeff Edgar motions that the Council issue another letter to the Wisconsin Congressional Delegation as well as Wisconsin Representatives Herb Kohl and Dave Obey Washington D.C. to express its concerns over the reduction of federal UF dollars to communities large and small. *The motion is passed and carried.*

#### **4.) Wisconsin Council on Forestry Report - Ken Ottman**

- a.) Ken Ottman summarizes success of the Governor's Conference on Forestry in building relationships with other forestry groups

- b.) Three important messages came out of the Urban Forestry Theme session at the Gov.'s Conference. Ken delivered these messages to the Wisconsin Council on Forestry at their last meeting:
  - i. Need for state to develop a continuous statewide urban forest inventory & assessment
  - ii. State should continue to develop its UF awareness & education campaign
  - iii. Need to minimize the impacts of invasive exotic species
- c.) The two issues discussed at length at the last WI Council on Forestry meeting:
  - i. Wisconsin's Forestry Mil Tax should not be used to pay debt service on backlogged forest stewardship.
  - ii. WI Council on Forestry members expressed their concerns over DNR Forestry budget and their recommendation not to further reduce DNR Forestry positions.
- d.) Paul DeLong suggests that WI Urban Forestry Council's message to Secretary Hassett might cite the failure of the Governor's budget to adhere to the (two above) recommendations made by the WI Council on Forestry. UF Council may also want to copy the chairman and members of the WI Council on Forestry on our budget message to Secretary Hassett.

#### **5.) Governor's Conference on Forestry Report - *Joe Wilson***

- a.) Joe Wilson gives kudos to UF issues planning team members especially them facilitator Matt Duvall
- b.) Conference planning committee has compiled results from all Governor's Conference themes:
  - i. Research
  - ii. Landowner Incentives
  - iii. Instruction/Outreach
  - iv. Policy
- c.) A follow-up meeting regarding these issues will be held on April 4<sup>th</sup> (10am-2pm). Joe Wilson will continue to represent UF to the Governor's Conference.
- d.) Joe also passed out copies of NUCFAC's 2004 National Report

#### **6.) DNR Report - *Dick Rideout***

- a.) Dick delivers U.S. Forest Service Report on behalf of Lisa Burban (absent). Lisa commended Joe Wilson's efforts in his role with NUCFAC as an advocate for UF in BOTH large cities AND non-metro areas.
- b.) Dick passed out list of 2005-07 Legislative Committee assignments to all members. This list should be helpful for Council members' lobbying activities. Ken Ottman advised Council on which of those legislators sit on the WI Council on Forestry. Dave Liska advises Council members to keep the list handy.
- c.) Dick passed out copies of federal UF budget forwarded by Lisa Burban
- d.) Nathan Eisner reviewed Council's quarterly financial report. The report was *approved with no changes*.
- e.) Dick reviewed UF Working Group's quarterly Accomplishment Report. Members should contact Dick with questions & clarifications.

#### **7.) Chairman's Report - *Dave Liska***

- a.) Bylaw changes were approved by majority vote as of 1/1/05.
- b.) Chair discussed development of "Chair's Cabinet" which will consist of Executive Committee members plus Annual Conference Committee and Communication Committee Chairpersons. The aim of this cabinet is to further provide "institutional memory" for the Council.

- c.) Chair addressed committee evaluations. Dan Traas will continue as Chair of the Annual Conference Committee. Heather Mann will continue as Chair of Communications Committee. Jeff Edgar will continue as Chair of Nominations Committee. All committee chairs were asked to evaluate the function of their respective committees.
- d.) Should annual awards responsibilities be moved from Nominations Committee? Chairman's Cabinet will meet and discuss. *This issue was tabled for further discussion.*
- e.) Position descriptions will be developed for officers, members at large, and organization representing members.
- f.) Dave summarizes the networking session for municipal tree managers held at the annual conference. Municipal networking groups from various regions gathered and shared the purpose & organization of their groups. Dave Liska encouraged networking groups to utilize Council as their advocates.
- g.) Bruce Allison shares progress on his two books including Wisconsin Champion Trees and Every Root an Anchor (coming soon).

## **8.) Break for Lunch**

## **9.) NADF Workshop Recap – Dave Liska**

- a.) Dave recapped details of NADF's *Building Effective Partnerships* workshop which took place in December in Lisle, IL. The workshop, which was attended by Dave Liska, Dick Rideout, Nathan Eisner, and Tracy Salisbury, provided an opportunity to network with urban forestry staff and council representatives from around the Midwest. Dave Liska and Dick Rideout spoke in the afternoon session where they regaled workshop-goers with highlights from Council members' lobbying efforts to stop Billboard legislation last year.
- b.) The workshop also featured Jill Johnson (U.S. Forest Service) demonstrating a new PowerPoint tool which was based on McPherson's research and designed to communicate urban forest benefits to municipalities. This tool can be customized for any community and is available free for download (contact Dick for further details).

## **10.) LEAF Update – Dave Liska**

- a.) Dave and Dick participated in January's urban forestry curriculum brainstorming session in Stevens Point for the LEAF Program. The group put forward critical areas of emphasis for urban forestry. After lessons are developed from these ideas, they will be reviewed by grade school teachers (K-6) who will help determine where in the curriculum these lessons might fit.

## **11.) New Business**

- a.) WLF Day on the Hill – *John Gall*
  - i. Over 200 (including over 40 WAA members) people participated in this event at the Capitol in Madison on 2/15/05. Participants used this opportunity to educate their legislators/aids about green industry issues ranging from fertilizer legislation to the value of trees. Every senator's office was visited during the day-long event.
  - ii. Event helped identify potential advocates for the industry.
  - iii. John Gall will email the result to Dick Rideout, who will forward them to the Council.
- b.) Tree City USA Banquet – *Tracy Salisbury*
  - i. Council members discussed whether or not to hold another Tree City USA Banquet in spring 2006.
  - ii. The group consensus was that this event is both a good public awareness event and a good opportunity to bring together city tree managers with their mayors for the day. The cost (approx. \$30,000) and the workload for Council members were also discussed.

- iii. *The motion to host the Banquet was passed and carried.*
- iv. Jeff Edgar noted that it may be necessary to hire an event planner to organize the event, but Dick said that the funds are available for this.
- v. Volunteers: Mike Maddox offered to handle the registration & invites again this year. Matt Duvall will chair the committee to organize the workshops/speakers. Jeff Gorman will handle the exhibitors again this year.
- vi. After some discussion on where the banquet should be held, a *motion to hold the banquet in Madison at Monona Terrace was passed and carried.*
- c.) NASF Annual Meeting – *Dick Rideout*
  - i. 2005 NASF Annual Meeting will be held in Madison October 2-6. This may be a good opportunity to showcase Wisconsin's UF program to a national audience.
- d.) Landscape Architect Licensure Legislation – *Bob Brush*
  - i. Landscape architects from around Wisconsin are working on state legislation that would require more advanced licensure for landscape architects. This would help define exactly what types of work LA's should/can do.
  - ii. Should the Council endorse this legislation? WAA endorsement is currently in the works. *Discussion was tabled until more information is available.*
  - iii. Bob Brush will email updates to the group as they become available.

## **15.) FUTURE MEETINGS**

- Wednesday, May 18<sup>th</sup> – Madison
- Thursday, July 21<sup>st</sup>??? – Superior (Dick will email group once date has been finalized with Bob Welch)
- Wednesday, November 30<sup>th</sup> - Madison

## **16.) ADJOURN**

- Motion made to adjourn, seconded.

## **Action Items:**

- Dave Liska issue a letter to DNR Secretary Hassett to express its concerns over the loss of UF grant administrations function imposed by the Governor's proposed position reductions of BOTH the UF Grant Coordinator AND the Southeast Regional Urban Forestry Coordinator positions.
- Dave Liska will issue another letter to the Wisconsin Congressional Delegation as well as Wisconsin Representatives Herb Kohl and Dave Obey Washington D.C. to express its concerns over the reduction of federal UF dollars to communities large and small.
- Dave Liska will copy the chairman and members of the WI Council on Forestry on our budget message to Secretary Hassett.
- All committee chairs will evaluate the function of their respective committees.
- John Gall will email the results of the WLF Day on the Hill to Dick Rideout.
- Dick Rideout will forward the results of the WLF Day on the Hill to the Council
- Dick Rideout will look into reserving Monona Terrace for Tree City Banquet.
- Bob Brush will email the Council regarding the LA licensure legislation as developments unfold.